

# TRAIL COUNT



## ***Annual Count & Survey of San José Trails***

*In partnership with:*

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
Guadalupe Park Conservancy  
Five Wounds Neighborhood  
Save Our Trails



SAN JOSE  
**PARKS, RECREATION &  
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES**



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# TRAIL COUNT 2016: At a Glance

## TREND

Most Count Stations\* report **increase** over the 2015 count.

\*small decrease seen at Los Gatos Creek-Hamilton (fewer than 100 trail users) and at Five Wounds corridor which is not yet developed as a trail

## CONTINUOUS GROWTH

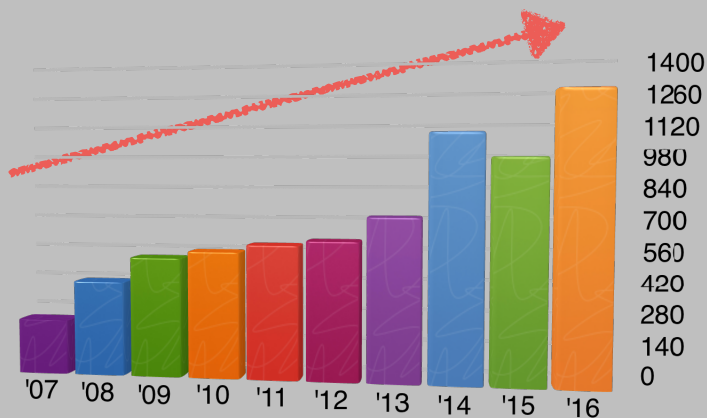
Guadalupe River Trail's Coleman Avenue Station saw a **29.9%** increase over 2015.

**1,269 persons** counted over 12 hours.

## COMMUTE PATTERN

Most count stations show a morning and evening peak that reflects a **weekday commute pattern**.

Guadalupe River Trail - at Coleman Avenue



## PERCEPTIONS

San José Trails offer a **Great (36.7%)** or **Good (50.3%)** impression.

Few respondents reported a **Fair (12.5%)** or **Poor (0.4%)** impression.

**Only 15%** of respondents are aware that San José has more Class I, off-street trails within the urban boundaries than well-regarded bike cities like Portland, Seattle, Austin and Minneapolis.

## GUADALUPE RIVER TRAIL / RIVER OAKS

More people counted at this station than ever before; **2,325** along the trail & pedestrian bridge.

## GUADALUPE RIVER TRAIL / COLEMAN AVE

Estimated annual use of over **506,000** per year.\*

\*Source: Rails to Trail Conservancy's Trail Volume Calculator

## Executive Summary

*Trail Count* is an annual count and survey conducted along San José's trails. Trail Count gathers valuable data from trail users that supports improved planning, design and gathering of financial resources through competitive grant-writing efforts. Trail Count 2016 is the 10th annual count and survey to be conducted in San José.

Trail Count 2016 occurred on Wednesday, September 14. This was 1 week prior to last year's count (conducted on September 23, 2015). A mid-September date is recommended by the *National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project*.

Nine count stations were established along eight existing trails and one to monitor a linear corridor proposed for trail development.

Volunteers at most count stations along existing trail systems recorded increases in usage, ranging from 1% to over 800%. High volume count stations along the Guadalupe River Trail saw between 20 and 30% increases over last year.

A few factors that may have impacted usage rates this year include:

- **Expanding trail systems and gap closures:** (Lower Guadalupe River Trail has seen an upward trend over the past decade as the system was paved, connections were made, and gaps like Airport Parkway were closed).
- **Access to employment and interest in Active Transportation:** Some trail systems are leading to downtown and north San José where employment sites continue to develop and new housing is more dense and located adjacent to trails.
- **Bike Culture:** Projects like the region's SF Bay BikeShare and City of San José events like Viva Calle (6-mile open streets event) support interest and access to bicycling.

This year's survey asked trail users about their purpose for use (exercise, recreation, commuting, other), the factors that motivate their regular use, and opportunities and challenges faced when using trails. The survey was promoted via postcards, social media and via advocacy groups. The survey was taken by 456 trail visitors which is the highest number in a decade of surveying. Trail users were encouraged to take the survey through a month-long pre-notification of Trail Count via [Twitter@SanJoseTrails](#) and [Instagram@SanJoseTrails](#), with daily reminders during the week of September 12 to 18.

Trails in San José meet the Class I Bikeway definition per the Caltrans Highway Design manual. They are most often paved and between 10 and 12' in width, framed by 2' wide gravel shoulders. Sidewalks and bike lanes are not considered even if addressing a current gap in the trail network. These on-street facilities are developed and managed by the City's Department of Transportation. Data was not gathered along on-street facilities as part of Trail Count.

## Background

### Purpose

Trail Count was initiated in 2007 to show the City Council the negative impact of trail closures resulting from Downtown special events. A portion of the Guadalupe River Trail was often closed during the Spring and Summer festival and event season. Events at Discovery Meadow, between Woz Way and San Carlos Street, closed the trail so that vehicles and food kiosks could make use of the paved trail. Events like the San Jose Grand Prix (2005-2007) required multi-day trail closures.

A formal Trail Closure Process was instituted as the result of Trail Count 2007 data. The process seeks to limit the number and extent of closures by requiring early coordination with Trail

Program staff, and requires a 2-week notification to trail users via posted signage and social media (Twitter@SanJoseTrails and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition).

Since 2007, Trail Count's objectives have expanded through use of a survey to project the number of daily trail users within the trail network, how the individual trail systems are being used (e.g., for recreation and/or active transportation), and user perceptions. For 2016, the Trail Count survey has focused on the Trail User's frequency of visits, preferred mode of travel (foot, bike, other), motivation for use of trails, distance of travel, and influence of nearby on-street bikeways and transit.

Data gathered from Trail Count makes the City more competitive for grant funding from local, state and federal agencies. The City was able to correlate Trail Count data to predict future trail usage along Coyote Creek. By having this data, the City was able to secure a \$5,200,000 Active Transportation Program grant to build the Coyote Creek Trail from Berryessa BART to Watson Park (Empire Street).

Seeking trail usage data is consistent with the Trail Program's vision of becoming the national leader for urban trail development. Data

The City of San José has developed many miles of trails over the past 15 years through a Collaborative Action Plan with the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

The two public agencies work together to provide public access to open space. The City assumes the recreational and maintenance responsibilities for trail usage. The Water District makes its lands available for public access while sustaining responsibility for maintenance and operation of the associated waterways.

Trail Count data helps the City Council and District Board monitor the value and impact of on-going collaboration.





collection provides staff with the information necessary to make data-driven decisions for better planning, design and operational decisions. Trail Count data also helps staff to advocate for maintenance funds and other budget recommendations made to the City Council.

## Partnership

Trail Count relies on collaboration with a variety of partners; each assuming a variety of roles and responsibilities:

Agency / Association / Company	Roles / Responsibilities
City of San Jose - Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services	Managed the overall event and volunteer recruitment for 6 count stations.
Guadalupe River Park Conservancy	Managed and staffed the Coleman Avenue Count Station.
Save Our Trails	Managed and staffed the Three Creeks Trail Count Stations at Willow Street and Bird Avenue.
Five Wounds Neighborhood	Managed and staffed the Five Wounds station at East Santa Clara Street (future trail alignment)
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	Outreached to its many members for volunteer recruitment
County of Santa Clara Health Department, Callander Associates, CH2M Inc. Mark Thomas & Company, Inc. and GHD, Inc.	Supported employee involvement as Trail Count station volunteers

## Analysis

### Planning Process

This year's count was held on Wednesday, September 14. The month of September is recommended by the [National Pedestrian and Bicycle Documentation project](#) (NPBD). San José follows the NPBD's recommendation because:

1. School is in session.
2. Weather is mild with rain unlikely.
3. Daylight hours extend past 6:00 pm.
4. Several applications are due late in the year so data timely.

A 12-hour count at all stations is highly desirable and was used at 6 count stations. Peak Hour counts (7:00-9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM) were used at one of the Three Creeks Trail stations, Five Wounds corridor, and Los Gatos Creek-Auzerais Avenue. The limited morning and evening counting periods offer value in capture the likely morning and even commute travel. A peak-hour count is consistent with the recommendations of the NPBD when volunteer resources are limited.

## Count Station Descriptions

- 1. Guadalupe River Trail at Coleman Avenue:** The station is located north of downtown San José. The trail travels through the 250-acre Guadalupe River Park & Gardens. The park's continuous trail borders large employers and housing developments. The Guadalupe River Trail system extends 9 miles from downtown to Silicon Valley's Golden Triangle (major employers include Cisco, Cadence, eBay). On September 14, the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy was hosting a Water Festival to draw teenagers to the park and waterway. The Count Station recorded the arrival of attendees, but avoided multiple counts as youth walked through the festival. A 12-hour count was conducted.
- 2. Guadalupe River Trail at San Fernando Avenue:** This station is centrally located in Downtown San José. Over the past several years, the count location has been shifted from Park Avenue to San Fernando Street. The trail system requires a crossing of the river along the Park Avenue bridge. This circuitous route makes it difficult for counters to track an individual and avoid double counts. In 2015, the station's location was at the top of bank, along McEnery Park. That location didn't fully resolve confusion in conducting the count. In 2016, the station was moved to the San Fernando Street Bridge. This location supported an easier count because the west bank upper trail, east bank lower trail and east bank upper trail can all be viewed from a single vantage point. A 12-hour count was conducted.
- 3. Guadalupe River Trail at River Oaks Parkway:** This station has the highest count and captures travel along the trail and the perpendicular River Oaks Parkway which links Light Rail to the Rivermark Neighborhood. A 12-hour count was conducted.
- 4. Los Gatos Creek at Auzerai Avenue:** This reach of the regional trail system is currently disconnected from the larger system and short in length (about 0.5-mile). The trail links Willow Glen (via Lonus Street, near Lincoln Avenue) to Midtown, a neighborhood to the west of Downtown. Auzerai Avenue is a low-volume arterial roadway with a signed bikeway leading directly to the Guadalupe River Park and trail near the Children's Discovery Museum. The newly developed Del Monte Park borders a portion of the trail to the west and offers a public restroom, dog park and play fields. Morning and Evening Peak counts were conducted.
- 5. Los Gatos Creek at Hamilton Avenue:** The regional trail system extends 9 miles from Meridian Avenue in San José, through Campbell and Los Gatos, terminating at the Lexington Reservoir dam. Los Gatos Creek is recognized as one of Silicon



Valley's most popular trails. The trail is adjacent to employment, housing, retail and park/open space. A 12-hour count was conducted.

6. **Los Alamitos Creek near Camden**

**Avenue:** The 6-mile trail system links to Lake Almaden, Calero Creek and Guadalupe River trails. The trail system travels through and along open space bounded by low-density residential development. A 12-hour count was conducted.



7. **Three Creeks Trail at Willow Avenue / Bird Avenue (2):** Two count stations occur along an interim trail which is not yet connected to nearby Los Gatos Creek Trail. The open space corridor has a earth-surface trail established by foot traffic. Members of the Save Our Trails organization gathered data at both the Willow Street and Bird Avenue entrances. Morning and Evening Peak counts were conducted at the Willow Street entrance. A 12-hour count was conducted at the Bird Avenue entrance.
8. **Five Wounds Corridor at William Street:** This former railway corridor was acquired by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (regional transit agency) for the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) project. Land between Highway 101 / Lower Silver Creek to Story Road is likely to be acquired and developed as a landscaped urban trail. The community is well-organized and advocating strongly for acquisition and development. Although currently undeveloped, the linear parcels are used by the community to walk through the neighborhood. Data collection at this early stage helps to show an existing need and support usage projections. Counting has occurred along the corridor since Trail Count 2012. Morning and Evening Peak counts were conducted.

### Data Collection Method

Volunteers were provided with the following tools.

- **Count Sheet:** Trail Count tracked users on counting sheet was for 12-Hour or Peak-Hour counts. The sheet provided space to count pedestrians, bicyclists and skaters, as well as their direction of travel. A “notes” field permits the recording of other user types (equestrian, Segway, etc.) or unusual conditions; special event attendees.
- **Survey “Postcard”:** A postcard was offered to trail users when safe to do so. Trail users were asked to complete the on-line survey by Sunday, September 18.
- **Instructions:** Guidance for preparing and returning the count sheet.

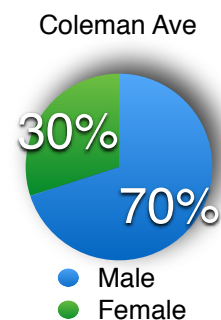


## Findings

**Over 7,700 trail users were counted this year.** The table includes the prior year's count data for comparative purposes.

COUNT LOCATION (open trails)	2015	2016	change
Guadalupe at Coleman	977	1269	29.9%
Guadalupe at San Fernando	1055	1306	23.8%
Guadalupe at River Oaks	2270	2325	2.4%
Los Gatos at Auzerai	167	171	-2.4%
Los Gatos at Hamilton	1137	1380	21.0%
Los Alamitos at Camden	819	924	12.8%
Three Creeks at Willow	39	42	7.7%
Three Creeks at Bird	23	212	821.0%
COUNT LOCATION (future trail)			
Five Wounds at William	183	145	-20.9%
<b>total</b>	6670	7774	

Counters are asked to identify bikers, walkers and “other” on the standard count sheet. The Guadalupe River Trail-Coleman Avenue Count Station (managed by the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy) supplements that data by counting the number of male and female trail users as well. The number of females observed along the trail slightly exceeds the national statistics that indicate 25% of trail users are female.



### Annual Volume per Count Station

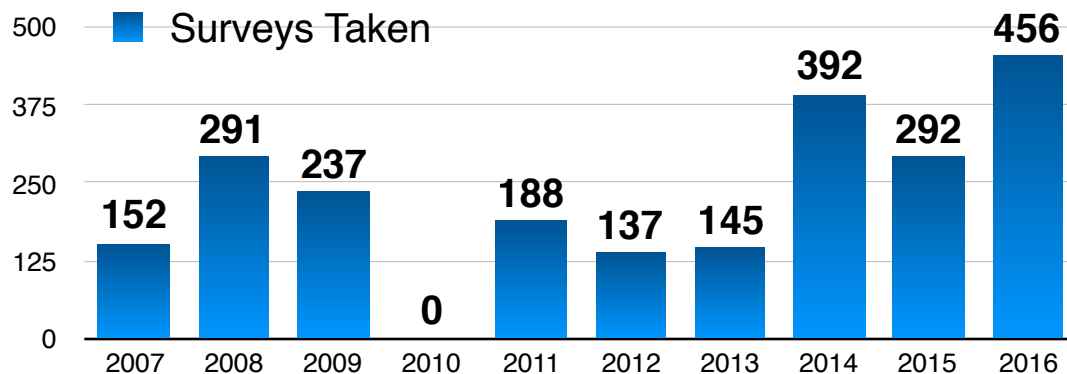
The following table uses the one day, 12-hour count data from this year's Trail Count to calculate the annual usage at the higher volume count stations. This calculation is made using the Rails To Trails Conservancy's Trail Traffic Calculator which was recently released. The calculator considers climate, time of year, and other factors to project a likely annual figure<sup>1</sup>.

Count Station (high volume sites only)	12-hour Count	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)	Annual Volume
Guadalupe at Coleman	1,269	1,387.36	508,386
Guadalupe at San Fernando	1,306	1,387.49	506,434
Guadalupe at River Oaks	2,325	2,316.72	845,603
Los Alamitos at Camden	924	1,059.82	386,834
Los Gatos at Hamilton	1,380	1,505.38	549,464

### On-Line Survey

The on-line survey was open from September 12 to September 18. There were 456 respondents (290 in 2015, and 392 in 2014). The survey included multiple-choice questions and opportunities for comments. Opportunities for respondents to provide written input was offered for several questions. Questions included common demographic questions per past surveys, and remaining questions asked for general input.

The survey had a response issue with Questions 5 and Question 6. The intent was to seek a single response, but the survey permitted either multiple responses for No. 5 or prevented multiple answers for No. 6. A number of respondents contacted staff via Twitter@SanJoseTrails to report that they couldn't move from question 6 to

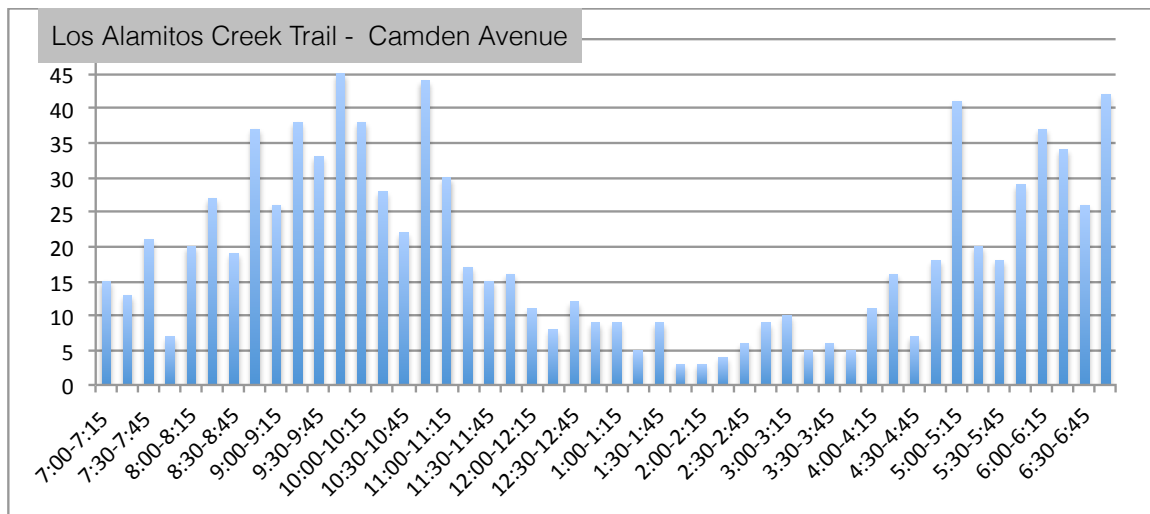


<sup>1</sup> <http://www.railstotrails.org/our-work/research-and-information/trail-modeling-and-assessment-platform/trail-traffic-calculator/>

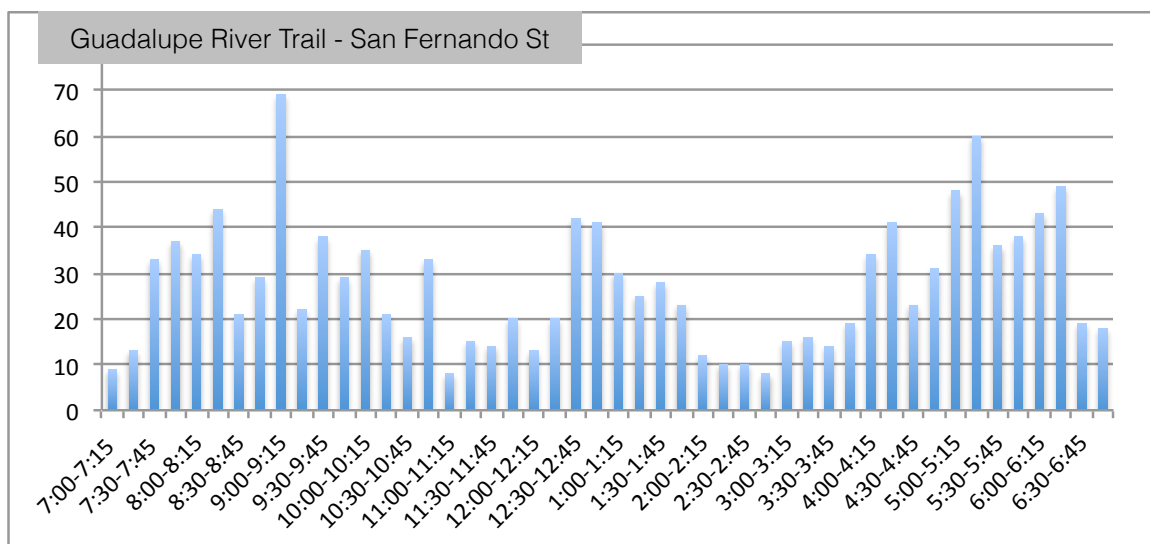
question 7. The survey structure was not changed as it was underway. A note has been taken to address the issue as part of Trail Count 2017.

### Travel Patterns

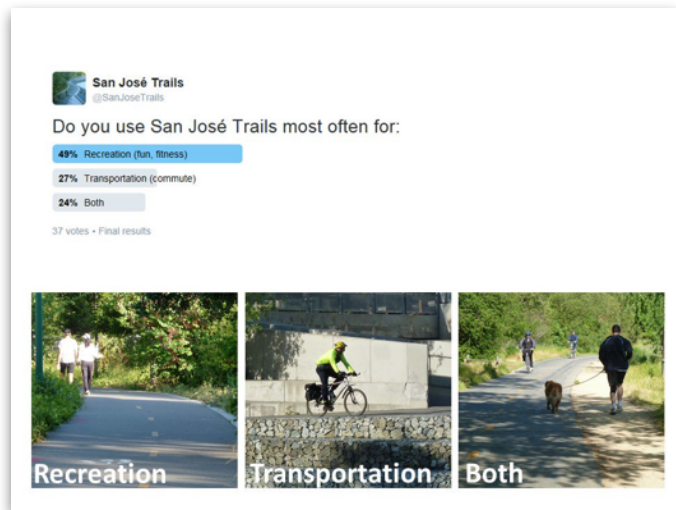
The following charts show the travel patterns based on recreation and active transportation. Los Alamitos Creek Trail is predominantly used for recreation, with only 7.6% of survey respondents reporting that they use the trail for commuting. The chart shows a prolonged period through the morning. Usage tapers off mid-day, and resumes at 5:00; a the end of the work day.



The Guadalupe River Trail is used more frequently for active transportation, with 35.4% reporting commuting to/from work. The chart shows a peak at 9:00am, a mid-day peak at the noon hour, and sustained afternoon usage starting around 5:00pm.



San José Trails high usage as active transportation corridors has been documented through past Trail Count surveys. The Guadalupe River Trail has seen reported usage of between 35% and 55% for active transportation. To supplement that research, a short-duration poll was posted on **Twitter@SanJoseTrails** in May 2018. Thirty-seven persons responded to the poll. Forty-nine percent (49%) responded that they use trails entirely for recreation. Twenty-seven percent (27%) indicated use of trails for “Transportation (commute)”. The remaining respondents, 24% reported using trails for both recreation and transportation.



### Observations from Survey Data

Highway 237 Bikeway Trail has the highest number of persons (36.6%) identifying their trail usage as “**active transportation**” (includes commuting to/from work and running errands). Over ninety percent (90.2%) are using a bicycle.

Considering all respondents to the survey, persons that report using trails for active transportation are more inclined to:

- Use a bike; **77.8%**,
- Visit several times per week; **57.9%**,
- Travel between 5 to 10 miles along a trail; **36.8%**,
- Spend between **30 minutes to 1 hour** per visit to a trail,
- Use trails **more often** than last year; **66.7%**,
- Recognize bike lanes as encouragement for greater trail usage; **57.89%**,
- Report that trails are the primary factor for bike/foot commuting; **100%**.



The Guadalupe River Trail is used for active transportation by **35.4%** of respondents. This within range of past counts, where 35% to 55% have reported using the trail for commuting and errands. **61.73%** of survey takers report using a bicycle on this trail system. This is higher than 41% observed at the Guadalupe River - Coleman Avenue Count Station.

San José’s percentage of persons using trails for active transportation seems to be high in comparison to national studies. Per the 2012 *National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviors*, conducted by the Pedestrian and Bicycle



Information Center, the percentage of travel by bike is 17% for errands, 7% for commuting to/from work, and 4% commuting to/from school. The combined national rate of 30% is lower than what is documented via the Trail Count survey along several San José Trails.

Other trail systems are used **predominantly for recreation**. Los Alamitos Creek Trail has only 7.6% of surveyed reporting that they use the trail for active transportation. Los Gatos Creek Trail has 18.0% and Coyote Creek Trail has 17.6% reporting use for active transportation.

The Los Alamitos Creek Trail and Alum Rock Park trails are favored by **women**. A majority of females (58.7%) use south San José's Los Alamitos Creek Trail and 55.8% visit Alum Rock Park trails. Other trail systems are used by a majority of males; 63.5% at Guadalupe River Trail, 57.3% at Coyote Creek Trail, 78.0% at Highway 87 Bikeway Trail and 54.5% at Los Gatos Creek Trail.

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services mission is *Building Community through Fun*. Survey takers were asked what motivates their use of trails (Question 6), with **"Fun/Joy"** being offered as one possible response. The largest share of respondents (50.9%) report that Fun and Joy are their primary motivation for visiting trails. This motivation was the same regardless of gender; 50.8% men and 49.2% women affirmed this motivation. Persons using the Guadalupe River Trail were most often using the trail for fun/joy; 56.7%, followed by Los Gatos Creek; 43.8%. These fun seekers are more prone to walk (62.2%), enjoy trails on their own (44.8%), and do so several times per week (48.8%). A second question (Question 9) about the reason for use. The term "fun" was aligned with "recreation", and the survey found a lower response rate of 17.66% as the opportunity to "Exercise" was the primary reason; 55.85%.



### Specific Findings

The following is a general summation of data collection, with the full data set is included as an attachment.

#### Question 1: What is your age?

The count was conducted on a work day (Wednesday), with schools in session. this may have limited the number of younger people aware of the survey. The survey was promoted multiple times on Twitter@SanJoseTrails and Instagram@SanJoseTrails. The survey found only 10 respondents being 24 years of age or younger. The remaining respondents were well-distributed across age groups. Five-seven (12.5%) reported being 65 years of age or older.



**Question 2: What is your gender?**

Survey respondents were 56.7% male and 43.5% female. There were a larger number of female trail users responding to the survey versus what Trail Counters observed at the Guadalupe River Trail - Coleman Avenue Station. In either case, more females were using San José Trails than the national data indicates for trail usage.

**Question 3: Which San José Trail(s) did you last visit?**

Nearly 60% of survey respondents had visited the Guadalupe River Trail. This may be more survey postcards were distributed at the three count stations along this busy trail system. Coyote Creek Trail, Los Alamitos/Calero Creek Trail and Los Gatos Creek Trail were also often visited. 9.4% of respondents had visited Alum Rock Park's trails. There was no count station at this park or nearby so survey respondents may have learned of the survey via social media or had been on another trail system on Trail Count day.

**Question 4: How often to you visit a San José Trail?**

57.1% of trail users report visiting a San José Trail several times per week and 18.5% at least once per week.

**Question 5: How do you most often use a San José Trail?**

This question about mode of travel. Respondents were about evenly split, with 50.1% using a bicycle (including bikes with electric assist). Responses exceeded 100% because multiple answers were permitted. 52.1% reported walking and 27.8% reported jogging or running. Two persons reported skating or rollerblading and one person reported using a wheelchair.

**Question 6: What motivates you to use San José Trails?**

This question is somewhat similar to Question 9; the questions ask about "motivation" and "reason" for use. Question 6 was intended to determine outcomes (fun/joy, exercise, saving money, care for the environment, efficient use of time) a trail user was seeking. The question permitted multiple responses and focused on what people were seeking to accomplish by using the trails. Exercise was the most frequent response with 85.5% responding. 50.9% also reported enjoying trails for "Fun / Joy" which is constant with the Department's mission to "Build community through Fun".

Trail users are predominantly visiting trails on their own (52.9% respondents). 6.4% reported visiting trails with their dog. About 10% reported "other" which allowed people to mention that they visit alternatively on their own or with friends.

**Question 8: How far did you go? What was your estimated round-trip mileage along the trail?**

There was broad range of responses to this question. There was about equal distribution of responses for 1-3 miles, 4-5 miles, 5-10 miles, and 10 or more miles.

**Question 9: What was your primary reason for using the trail today?**

This question was different from Question 6 as it offered response categories that were physical outcomes. 55.9% reported visiting the trail for exercise or working out. Notably, about 23% reported using the trail for Commuting or Active Transportation. From past surveys, we have found that between 35% and 55% of Guadalupe River Trail users are commuting to work. Per Trail Count 2016 data, we found that 34.7% were commuting - which is consistent with the prior lower range. The term “Fun” appeared in this question, but aligned with Recreation and Relaxation - 17.7% reported this as their primary reason for use of the trail.



**Question 10: For a typical visit, how much time do you spend along the trail?**

About 80% responded spending between 30 minutes to 2 hours along the trail.



**Question 11: Over the past year, I have visited San José Trails...**

About 53% responded visiting trail more often. 8.2% were visiting trails less often.

**Question 12: If using trails more often - why is that the case?**

80.7% reported a desire for more exercise. Multiple responses were permitted, so about 32% were seeking more leisurely activities, and 20.5% reported that improved trail quality lead them to visit more frequently.

Respondents were able to provide further input - responses included proximity to a trail, a recent move to San José, seeking more exercise, and destinations along the trails. One person responded that PokémonGo had him/her visiting trails more often.



**Question 13: Do San José Trails allow you to exercise or commute by foot or bike more often.**

92.4% of respondents report that trails support more exercise and commuting. Several respondents noted that the question's complex sentence structure left them unclear on how to respond. A few respondents reminded the survey author that the complex sentence structure made this question confusing. A note has been added to the “lessons learned” file to improve the question for future Trail Count surveys.

**Question 14: Do on-street Bike Lanes encourage you to use San José Trails more often?**

47.0% reported that bike lanes did encourage trail usage. Persons that did not feel encouraged by Bike Lanes offered input. They preferred to be on off-street trails, they didn't necessarily feel safe on roadways, or they didn't use a bicycle. Similar to Question 13, a respondent was critical of the author's phrasing of this question's structure.

**Question 15: Do you use transit to reach San José Trails?**

A large majority (88.6%) reported not using transit to reach San José Trails. The 34 persons that did report using transit mentioned Light Rail and ACE Train. Four persons mentioned using a bus.

**Question 16: Does access to a nearby San José Trail allow you to sometimes leave your car at home?**

63.7% reported the opportunity to leave a car at home due to trail usage.

**Question 17: What is your general impression of San José Trails?**

Responses were overall favorable, with 36.7% saying Great and 50.3% saying Good.

Respondents were asked what could be done to improve the impression of San José Trails. Responses included:

- Concern about homeless
- Build more trails
- Way finding / Signage
- Maintenance (Daily); garbage collection
- Maintenance (Sustained); pavement repair
- Renovate features; par course, fencing
- User behavior; speeding cyclists
- Better connections to transit

**Question 18: Which of the following cities has the most off-street trails?**

Research conducted as part of the Trail Program Strategic Plan found that San José has more Class I, off-street trails than Portland, Seattle, Minneapolis and Austin. Only 15.1% of respondents were able to confirm San José as a trail leader, and 69.5% stated that they did not know the answer.

The question suggests that San José has a marketing and communication task, but also an opportunity to leverage its trails for a more bike-friendly reputation amongst competitive urban centers.



**Question 19: What would make San José the country's best biking city?**

Anticipating that question 18 would demonstrate that San Joséans are unfamiliar with the scale of the Trail Network, this question sought to identify meaningful projects to improve the public perception.

Somewhat surprisingly, many of the responses asked for more and better on-street bikeways. This may suggest that trail users view all bikeways (off-street trails and on-street bike lanes) as part of an integrated network. If that's the case, they may view trails as well-developed and wish to see a focus to extend on-street bikeways to reach trails. This question will be explored further with future Trail Count surveys.

A number of respondents did seek “more trails like Guadalupe”, more restrooms along trails, desired fewer trail users, more signage/way finding, and better maintenance and security.

**Question 20: Please provide any feedback that you may have.**

About 60 offered mostly positive responses; expressions of thanks, appreciation for continuously improving trails, and acknowledgment of trail maintenance.

- “Thanks for asking for public feedback”
- “Great, neat and clean trails, keep it up”
- “Thank you for doing this. I care deeply about bike infrastructure”.
- “I appreciate your Twitter account”

Several people expressed concerns about speeding cyclists, the need for warning and way finding signage, lack of investment in trails, issues with the survey structure, concern for safety of older trail users, and the need to address homeless/vagrancy issues.

- “The stretch of trail that I take can improve greatly with lighting”
- “More Rangers”
- “Please connect the trails”
- “Please do a better job of PR, since very large numbers of people in San Jose care deeply about the City's trails and parks”



## Conclusion

Trail Count 2016 documented an upward trend in usage at most count stations. Several stations have over 1,000 daily users. The corresponding survey confirms that San José Trails support recreation and active transportation, with about 35% commuting along the Guadalupe River Trail and Highway 87 Bikeway trails.

Count data from prior years has supported competitive grant writing. In 2016, the City secured a \$5.5M grant through the California Active Transportation Program. Data from Trail Count supported statements about anticipated usage volumes and commuter potential of the Coyote Creek Trail system from Berryessa BART to Watson Park (Empire Street). Over the past 15 years, the Trail Program has secured \$35,000,000 in competitive grants by referring to Trail Count.

This year's findings are encouraging because Trail Count 2015 had documented declining usage at several stations which had not previously occurred since the start of counts in 2007. It appears that 2015 was a short-term pause in trail usage and that trails continued to draw more visitors in 2016.



## Acknowledgement

Trail Program staff wishes to acknowledge the many volunteers that make Trail Count successful year after year. The following organizations lead and gathered volunteers for various count stations:

- Guadalupe River Park Conservancy,
- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition,
- Five Wounds Community,

We also want to express thanks to our private corporate and public agency partners:

- Callander Associates,
- CH2M-Hill Inc.,
- Mark Thomas & Company, Inc., and
- GHD Inc.
- County of Santa Clara Health Department
- Santa Clara Valley Water District

Special thanks goes to Mollie Tobias, our volunteer coordinator. Mollie is always resourceful and pulls together a great team of volunteers year after year.

Thank you all! Please let us know how you make use of Trail Count data.

Yves Zsutty

Trail Manager

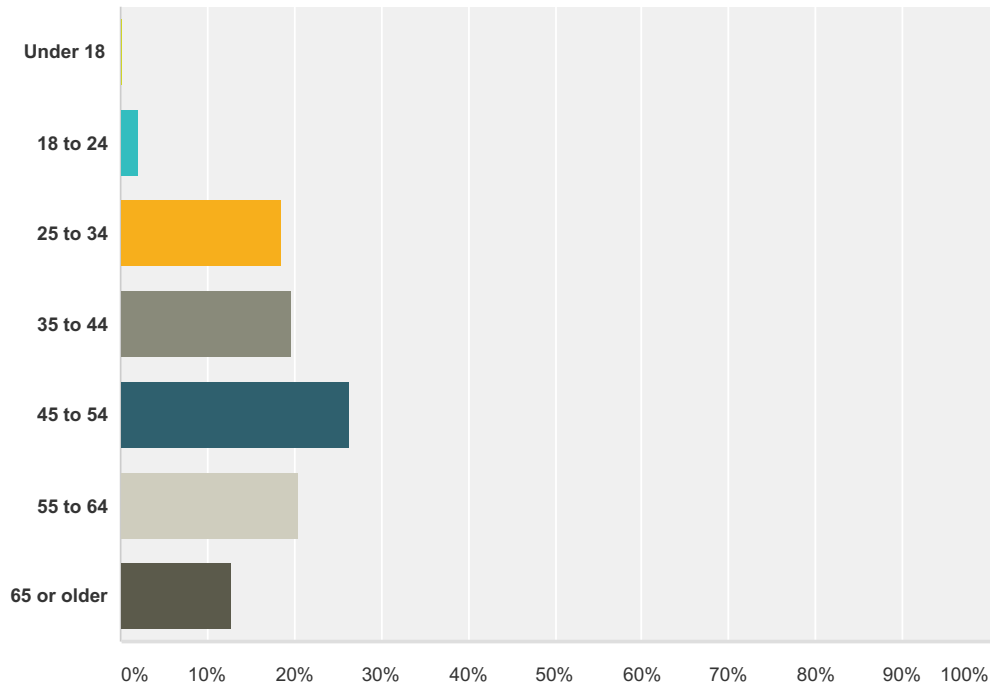
Department of Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Trail Program



## **Attachment (Survey Monkey)**

## Q1 What is your age?

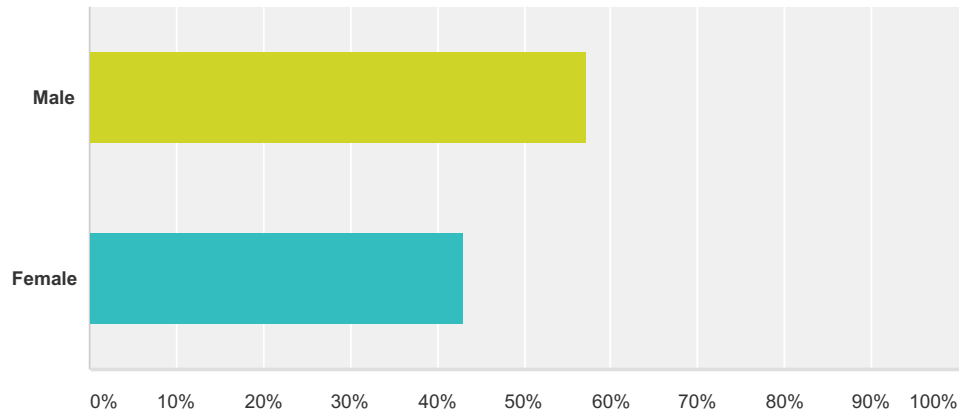
Answered: 474 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Under 18	0.21% 1
18 to 24	2.11% 10
25 to 34	18.57% 88
35 to 44	19.62% 93
45 to 54	26.37% 125
55 to 64	20.46% 97
65 or older	12.66% 60
<b>Total</b>	<b>474</b>

## Q2 What is your gender?

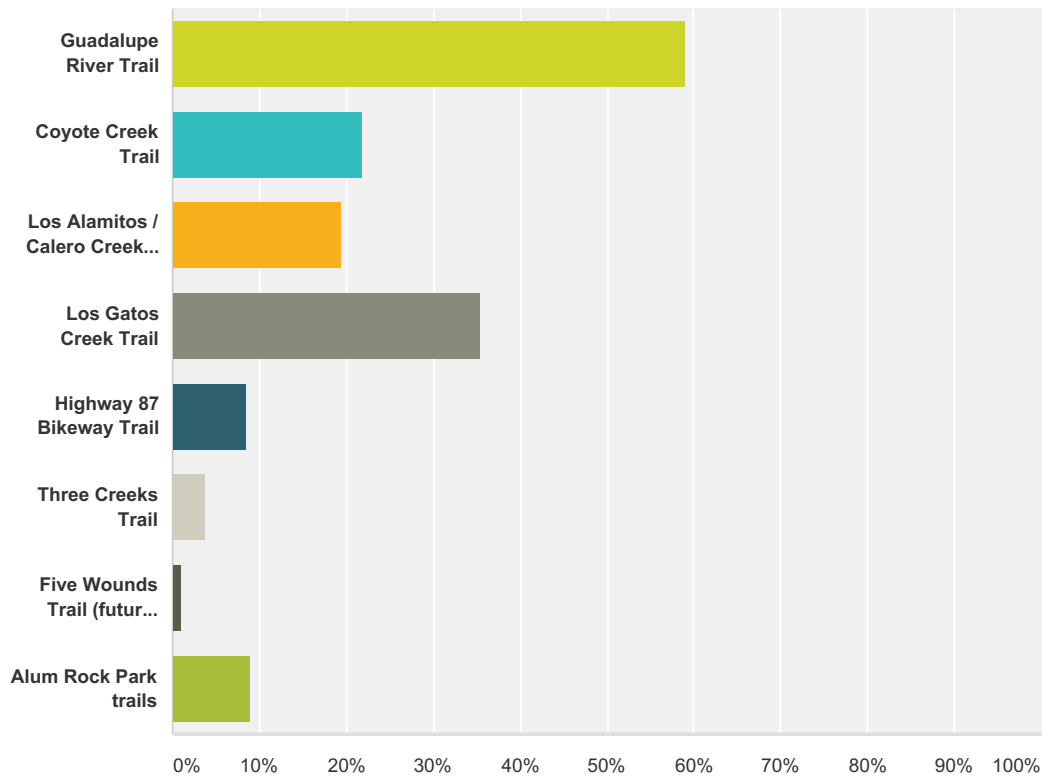
Answered: 472 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	57.20%	270
Female	43.01%	203
Total Respondents: 472		

### Q3 Which San José trail(s) did you last visit?

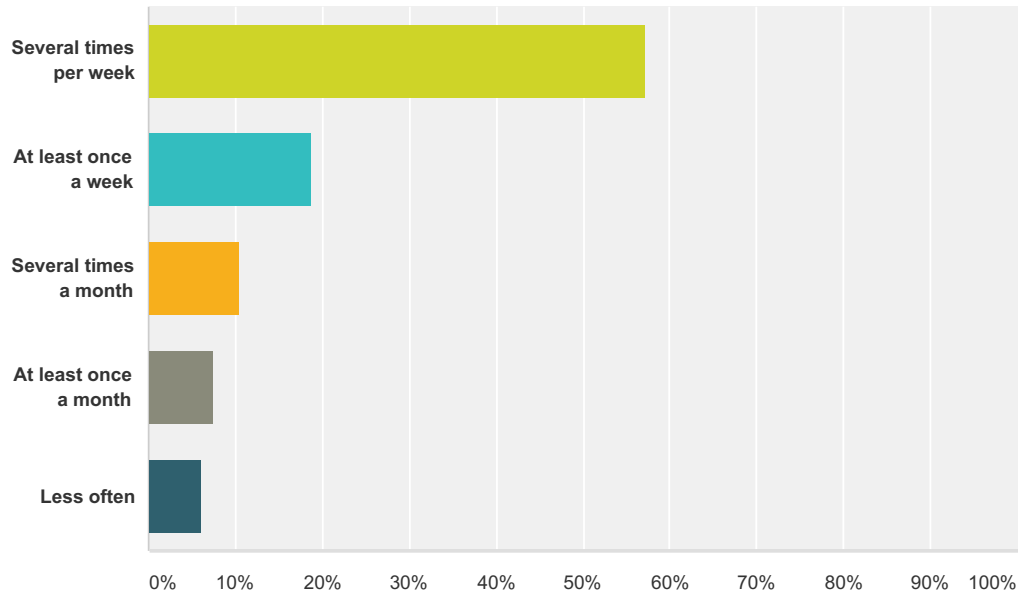
Answered: 474 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Guadalupe River Trail	59.07% 280
Coyote Creek Trail	21.94% 104
Los Alamitos / Calero Creek Trail	19.41% 92
Los Gatos Creek Trail	35.44% 168
Highway 87 Bikeway Trail	8.65% 41
Three Creeks Trail	3.80% 18
Five Wounds Trail (future trail alignment)	1.05% 5
Alum Rock Park trails	9.07% 43
Total Respondents: 474	

## Q4 How often do you visit a San José Trail?

Answered: 472 Skipped: 2

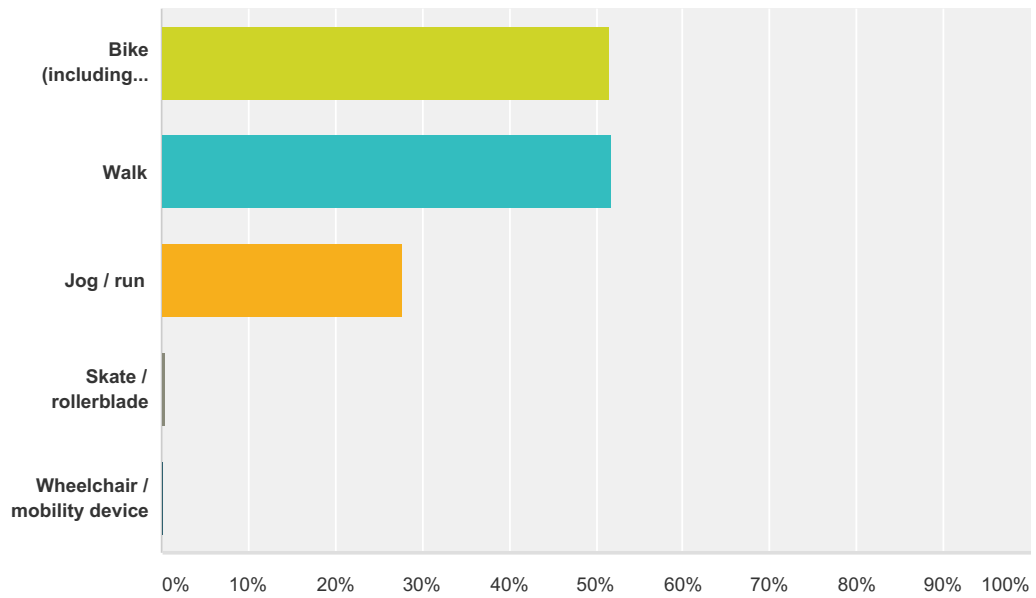


Answer Choices	Responses	
Several times per week	57.20%	270
At least once a week	18.86%	89
Several times a month	10.38%	49
At least once a month	7.42%	35
Less often	6.14%	29
<b>Total</b>		<b>472</b>



## Q5 Howdo you most often usea San José Trail?

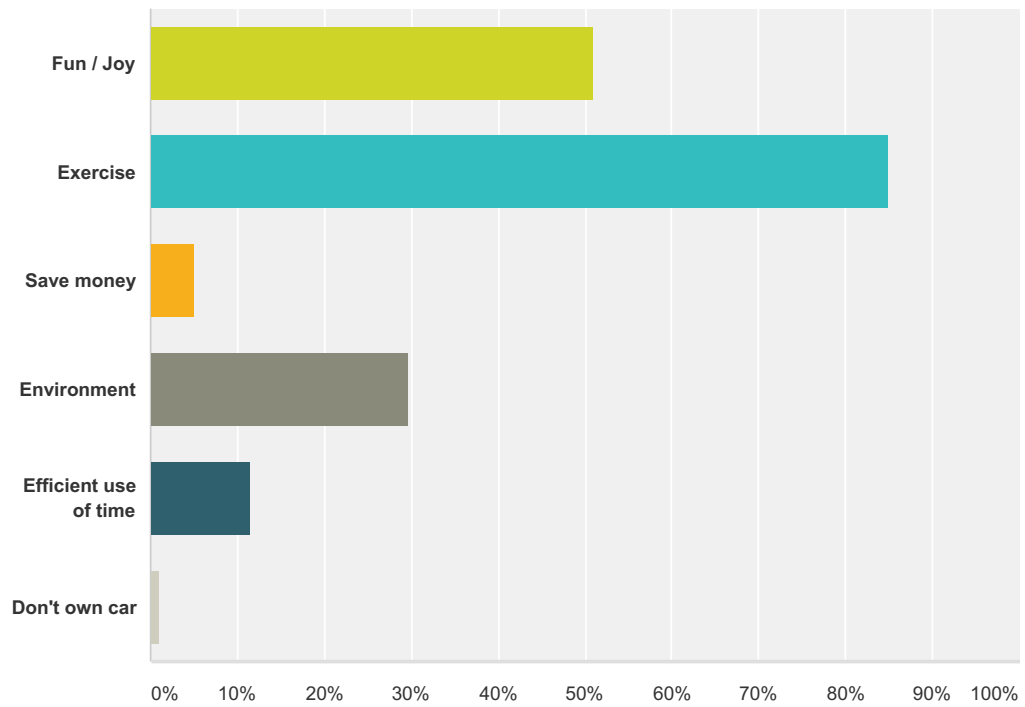
Answered: 471 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Bike (including electric assist)	51.59%	243
Walk	51.80%	244
Jog / run	27.81%	131
Skate / rollerblade	0.42%	2
Wheelchair / mobility device	0.21%	1
Total Respondents: 471		

## Q6 What motivates you to use San José Trails?

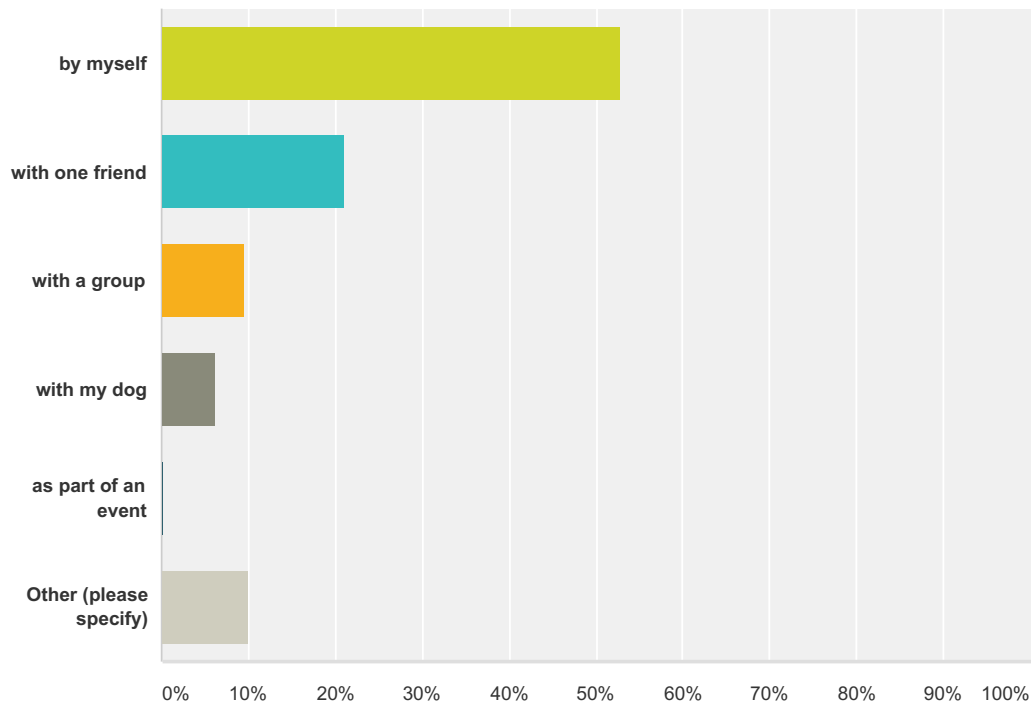
Answered: 473 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Fun / Joy	50.95% 241
Exercise	84.99% 402
Save money	5.07% 24
Environment	29.60% 140
Efficient use of time	11.42% 54
Don't own car	1.06% 5
<b>Total Respondents: 473</b>	

## Q7 Do you visit San José Trail on your own or in a group?

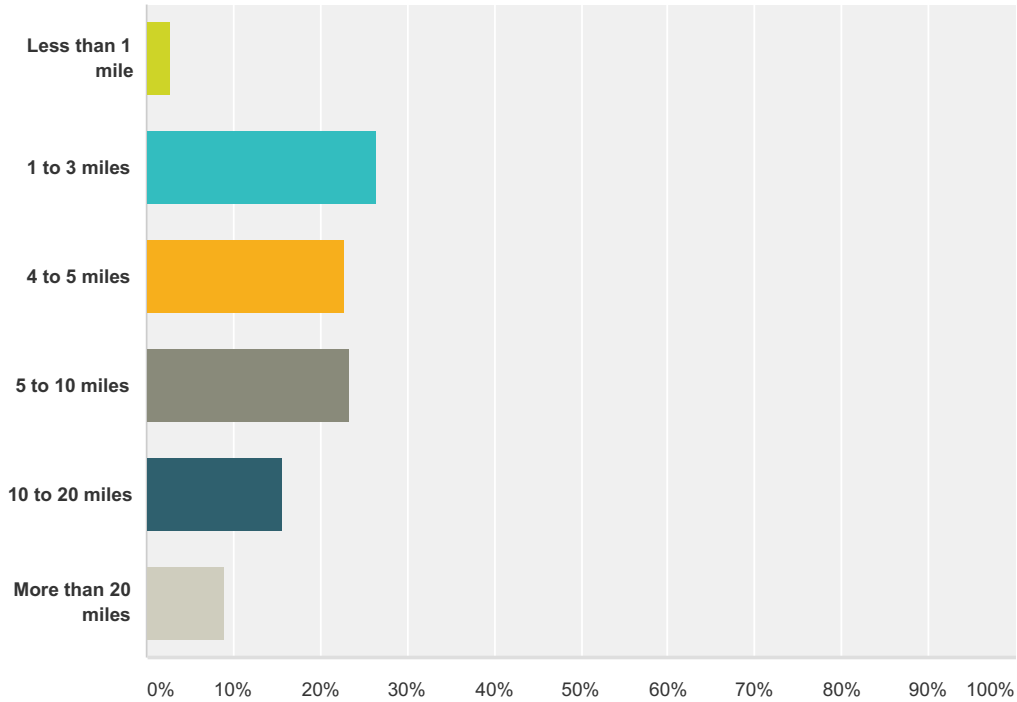
Answered: 472 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
by myself	52.75% 249
with one friend	21.19% 100
with a group	9.53% 45
with my dog	6.36% 30
as part of an event	0.21% 1
Other (please specify)	9.96% 47
<b>Total</b>	<b>472</b>

## Q8 How far did you go? What was your estimated round-trip mileage along the trail?

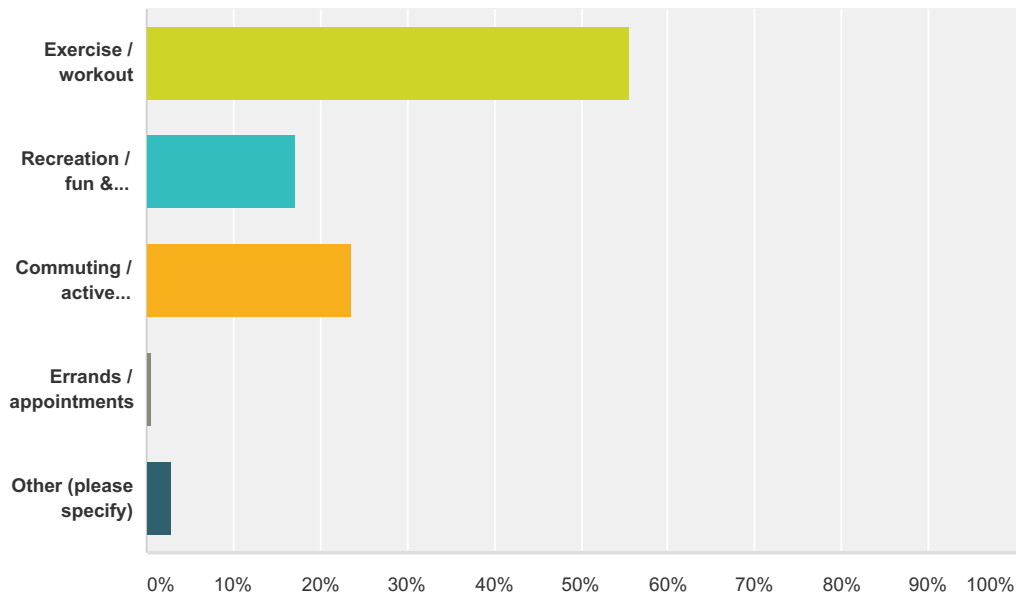
Answered: 473 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 mile	2.75%	13
1 to 3 miles	26.43%	125
4 to 5 miles	22.83%	108
5 to 10 miles	23.47%	111
10 to 20 miles	15.64%	74
More than 20 miles	8.88%	42
<b>Total</b>		<b>473</b>

## Q9 What was your primary reason for using the trail today?

Answered: 471 Skipped: 3

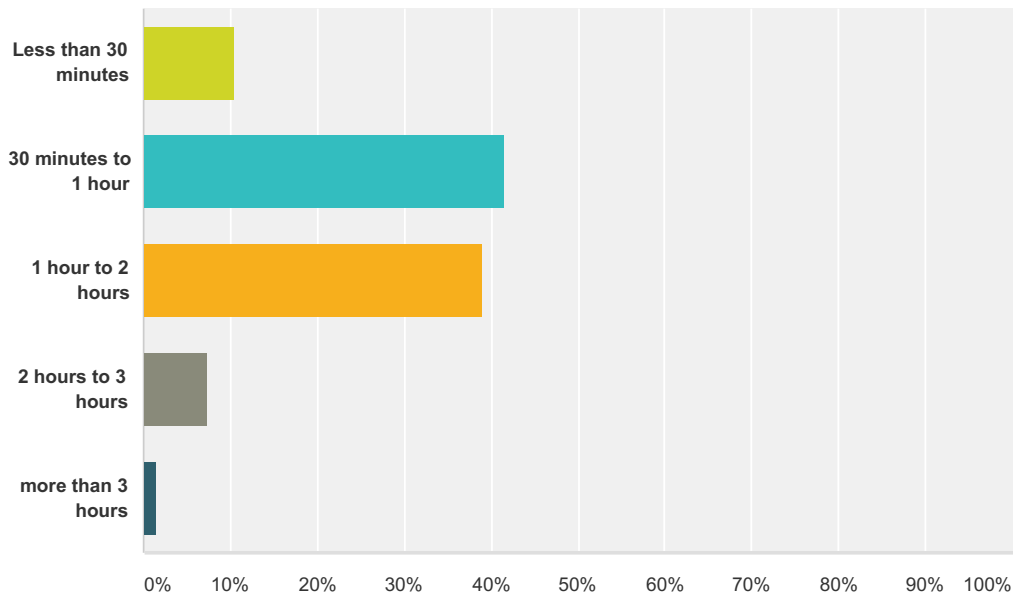


Answer Choices	Responses	
Exercise / workout	55.63%	262
Recreation / fun & relaxation	17.20%	81
Commuting / active transportation (to work, school or other)	23.57%	111
Errands / appointments	0.64%	3
Other (please specify)	2.97%	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>471</b>



## Q10 For a typical visit, how much time to spend along the trail?

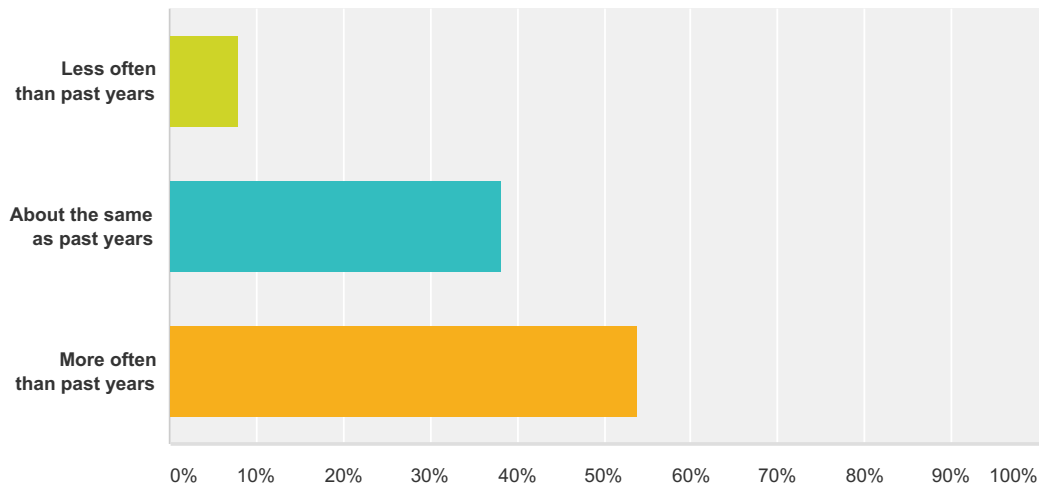
Answered: 473 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 30 minutes	10.36%	49
30 minutes to 1 hour	41.65%	197
1 hour to 2 hours	39.11%	185
2 hours to 3 hours	7.40%	35
more than 3 hours	1.48%	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>473</b>

## Q11 Over the past year, I have visited San José trails...

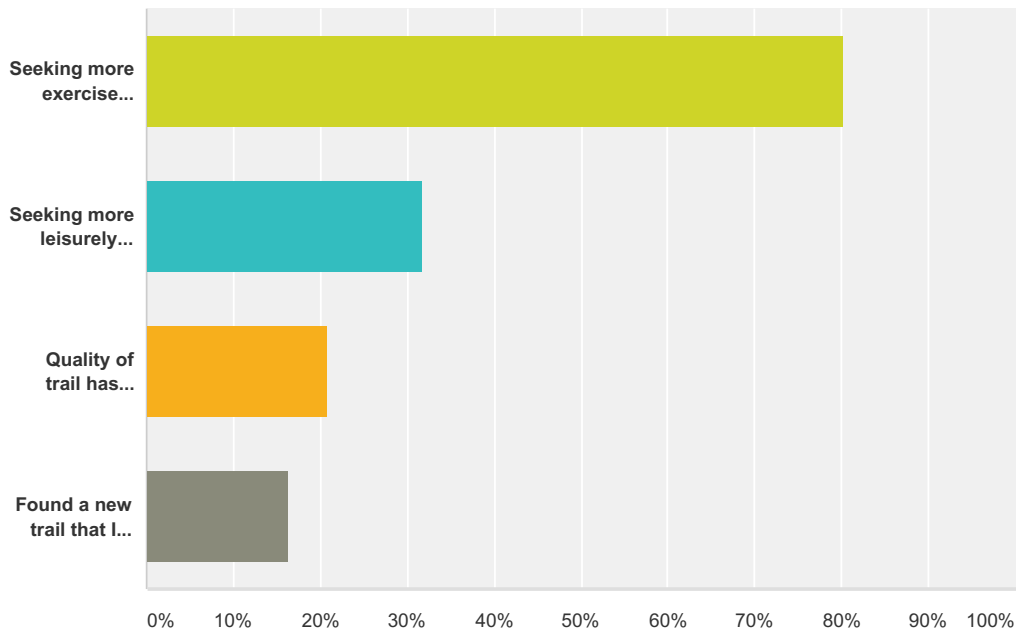
Answered: 470 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less often than past years	7.87%	37
About the same as past years	38.30%	180
More often than past years	53.83%	253
<b>Total</b>		<b>470</b>

## Q12 If using trails more often - why is that the case?

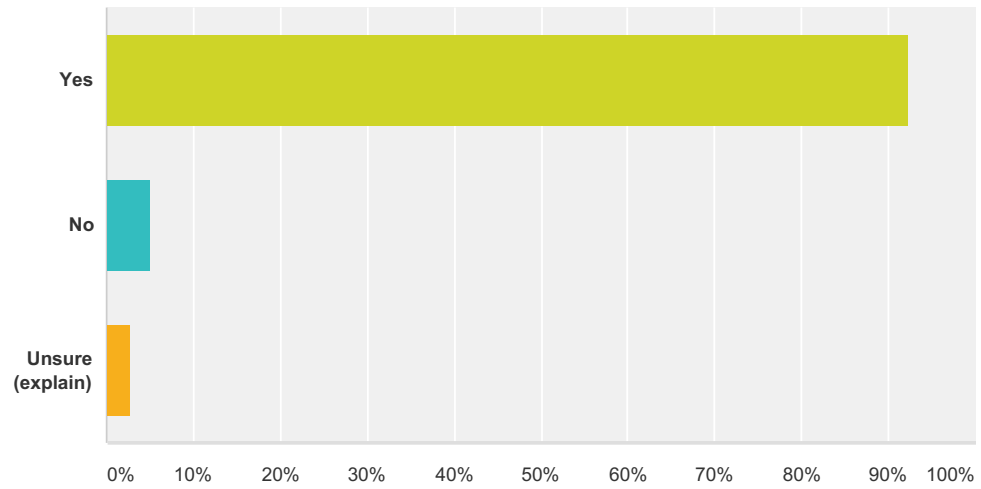
Answered: 283 Skipped: 191



Answer Choices	Responses	
Seeking more exercise (walking / jogging / biking)	80.21%	227
Seeking more leisurely activity (quiet time / enjoying nature)	31.80%	90
Quality of trail has improved	20.85%	59
Found a new trail that I enjoy	16.25%	46
Total Respondents: 283		

**Q13 Do San José Trails allow you to exercise or commute by foot or bike more often?**

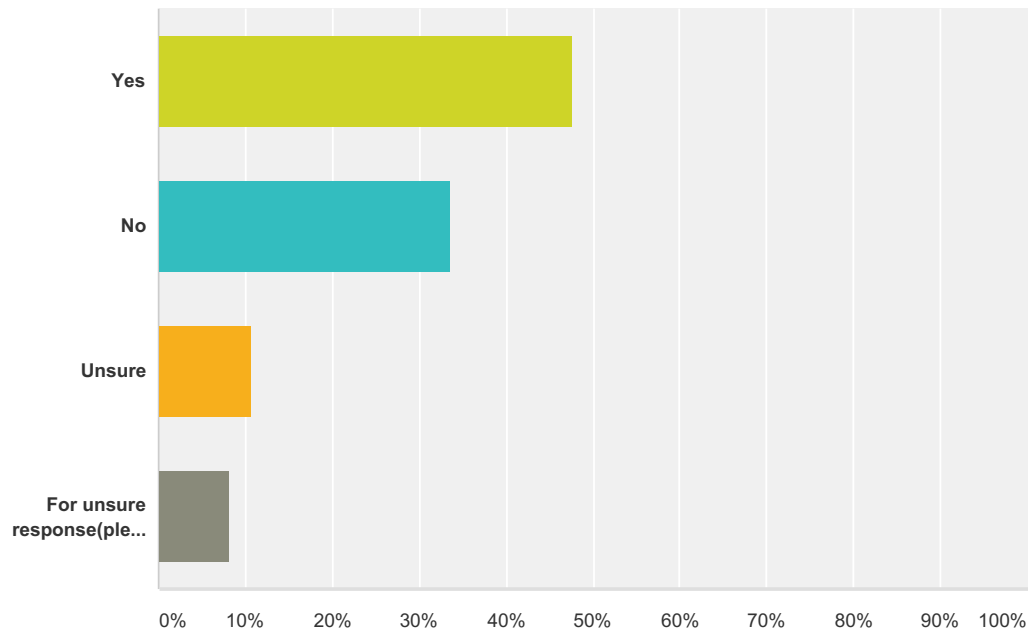
Answered: 467 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	92.29%	431
No	4.93%	23
Unsure (explain)	2.78%	13
Total		467

## Q14 Do on-street Bike Lanes encourage you to use San José Trails more often?

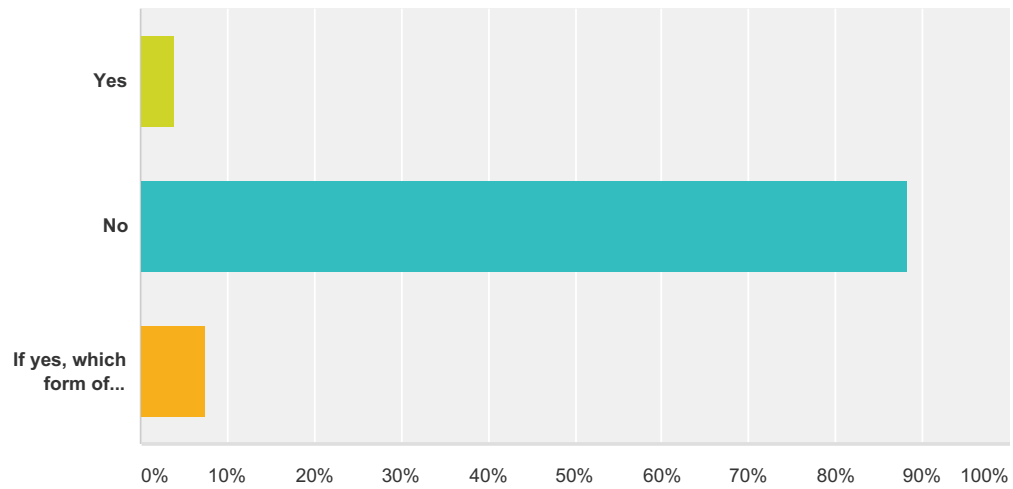
Answered: 467 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	47.54%	222
No	33.62%	157
Unsure	10.71%	50
For unsure response(please explain)	8.14%	38
<b>Total</b>		<b>467</b>

## Q15 Do you use transit to reach San José Trails?

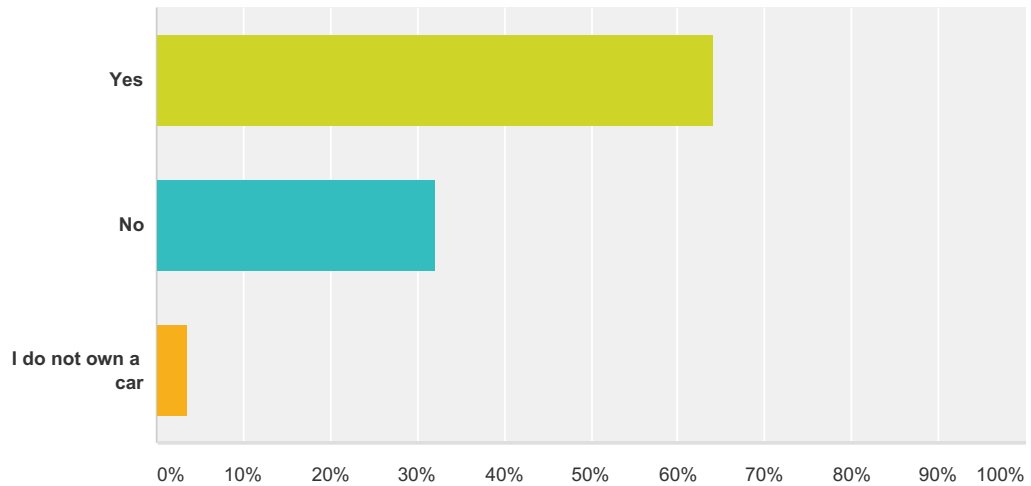
Answered: 474 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	4.01%	19
No	88.40%	419
If yes, which form of transit? (Bus, Light Rail, other)	7.59%	36
<b>Total</b>		<b>474</b>

## Q16 Does access to a nearby San José Trail allow you to sometimes leave your car at home?

Answered: 472 Skipped: 2

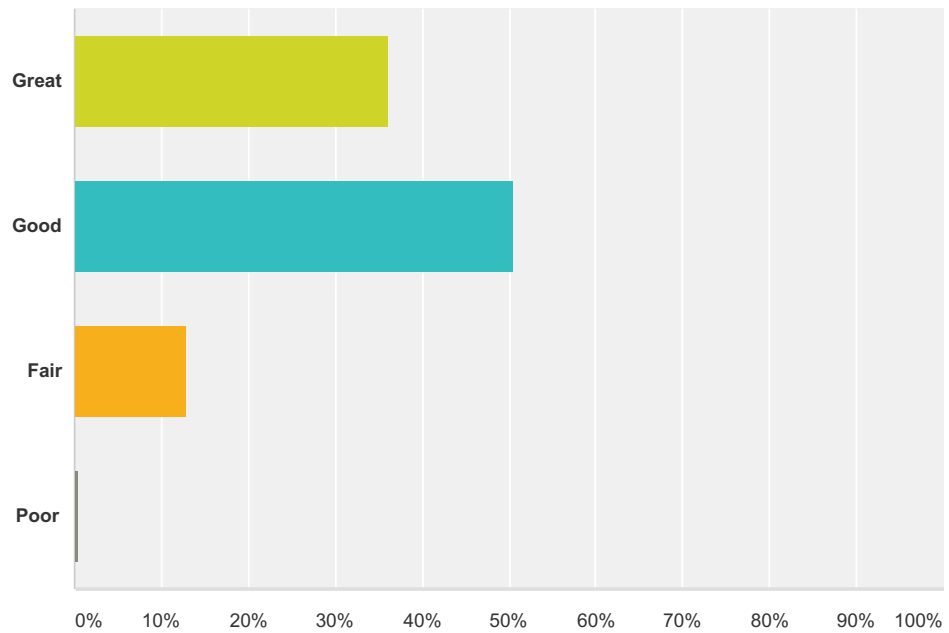


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	64.19%	303
No	32.20%	152
I do not own a car	3.60%	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>472</b>



## Q17 What is your general impression of San José Trails?

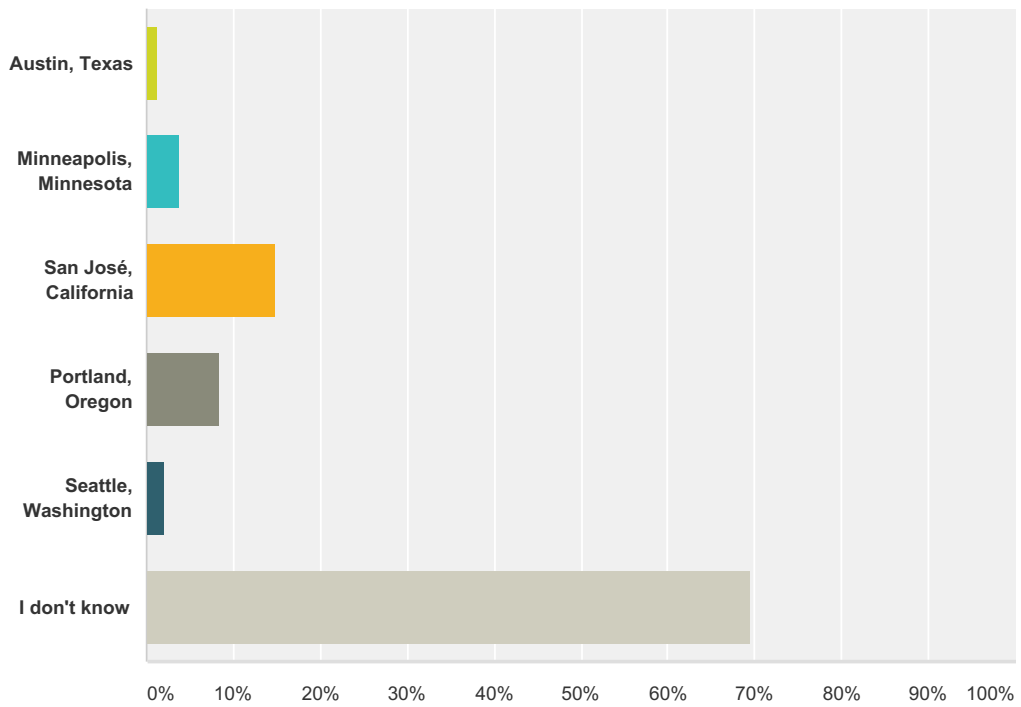
Answered: 473 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Great	36.15%	171
Good	50.53%	239
Fair	12.90%	61
Poor	0.42%	2
Total		473

## Q18 Which of the following cities has the most off-street trails?

Answered: 474 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Austin, Texas	1.27% 6
Minneapolis, Minnesota	3.80% 18
San José, California	14.77% 70
Portland, Oregon	8.44% 40
Seattle, Washington	2.11% 10
I don't know	69.62% 330
<b>Total</b>	<b>474</b>

**Q19 What would make San José the country's best biking city?**

Answered: 310 Skipped: 164

**Q20 Thank you for taking the survey and please share any feedback in the box below. Survey results will be release next week (on or after September 19). Follow us on Twitter@SanJoseTrails for survey findings, trail updates and news.**

Answered: 62 Skipped: 412